

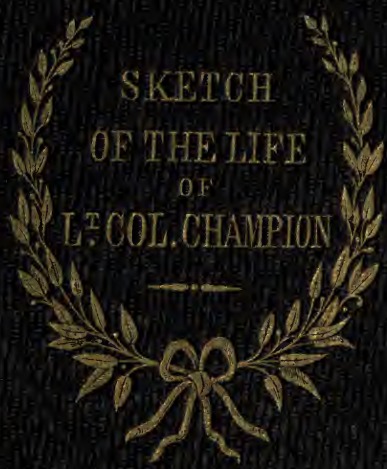
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SKETCH
OF THE LIFE
OF
L^T COL. CHAMPION



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To

Miss Forbes

with-kind love

from E. M. C. July 1856.



SKETCH OF THE LIFE

OF THE

LATE LIEUT.-COLONEL CHAMPION,

OF THE 95TH REGIMENT.

WITH

EXTRACTS FROM HIS CORRESPONDENCE.



FOR PRIVATE CIRCULATION ONLY.

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HENRY MORSE STEPHENS



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SKETCH
OF THE
LIFE OF LIEUT.-COL. CHAMPION.

CHAPTER I.

EARLY DAYS.

IT has been remarked upon several occasions during the present war, that the British private soldier, although in no degree less courageous in action, less patient under suffering, or resolute in endurance, than he formerly was, has evinced, in addition to these great qualities, an amount of religious feeling wholly unexpected. We are assured by those who have watched by the sick beds of our gallant troops, that nothing could be more touching than the gentle resignation of those who had been fiercest in the strife; and that their duty to their country having been nobly performed, their next anxiety was to meet their fate as became Christian soldiers.

That such a sentiment should exist so widely among rough men whose profession is that of arms, must be ascribed in part to an improvement in the education

of large numbers of the poor, along with an advance in civilisation among all ranks of society ; and also to that higher tone of morality which, now pervading the highest classes, has extended its beneficial influence among military men as well as others, and has even descended to the lowest points of the social scale. The events of the last few months have shown that a soldier may fear God without fearing man ; and that genuine piety is in no degree incompatible with dauntless courage in battle, and heroic devotion to duty. Of this the late Lieutenant-Colonel Champion, the subject of the present sketch, was a noble example.

John George Champion was descended from a family which formerly possessed estates in Somerset and Wiltshire, tracing their descent from a Norman follower of William the Conqueror. By intermarriage, they were also connected with the collateral descendants of Lord Chancellor Hyde.

He was born in Edinburgh on the 15th of May, 1815. His father, major in the 21st Royal N.B. Fusileers, married Elizabeth, daughter of W. Urquhart, Esq., of Craigston, and was killed in 1825 in the island of St. Vincent, by a furious soldier, who mistook him for another officer. The widowed mother then returned to Scotland, where her eldest son, John George, remained till he obtained a cadetship at Sandhurst. Letters written in his childhood, and still preserved, show that when only nine years old he had already shown indications of a love for natural history, by his knowledge of which he eventually became greatly distinguished. At that early age he was raising cater-

pillars, and watching their transformations with all the interest of a man of science.

On the 12th of August, 1828, when thirteen years old, he entered Sandhurst, and commenced his military education. His own wishes were directed to a very different profession. The church was the field on which he had fixed his boyish affections, and it was not without a severe struggle, nor till he heard that his mother's future comfort depended greatly upon his acceptance of the appointment which had been procured for him, that he forsook the path which he had vainly hoped to follow. The decision once formed, he never afterwards uttered one word of regret, but applied himself resolutely, and with all his energy, to the prosecution of the studies demanded in his unexpected career. The correspondence with his mother evinces the most devoted affection, and shows how deeply implanted in his nature was that gentle thoughtfulness for others which so much endeared him in after life to all who knew him. "If ever there was seen in youth the foundation of a fair prospect of a virtuous and honourable life; if the strongest aversion from any act of deceit, and the most marked attention to order and every virtuous habit, are to be held as just grounds for entertaining high hopes of a future career, then will he have great change in his whole nature if such an expectation is not realised." To this effect wrote the Rev. W. Edwards, his tutor, in 1828; and his words were prophetic. •

While at Sandhurst, he worked most diligently, and received a certificate of especial approbation from the

Collegiate Board. On the 30th of June, 1831, he passed his public examination, being second on the list of candidates for commissions; and, on the 2nd of August following, was appointed to an ensigncy in the 95th regiment, having been in the college only three years.

CHAPTER II.

PEACE.

MR. CHAMPION was now sixteen years old, young, small for his age, and from intense study he appeared too delicate for his profession; but it was soon found, by his brother officers, that beneath that gentle exterior there lurked, not only the fiery spirit of a soldier, but the cool self-possession of a veteran. The 95th was in Guernsey when he joined it. Shortly afterwards, a drunken private, having quarrelled with his serjeant, loaded his musket, locked himself into the barrack-room, and, when the serjeant attempted to open the door, fired, but, fortunately, without effect. The man then reloaded, and threatened to shoot the first person who might again attempt to enter. While the officers were consulting upon the best way of securing the culprit, Mr. Champion threw up the window of the barrack-room, jumped in, seized and disarmed the man, and brought him out a prisoner, before it was known that he contemplated the daring act. It is needless to say, what effect this produced upon those who witnessed it; or, that it secured the young officer the respect and admiration of

the regiment—feelings which underwent no diminution in after years.

From Guernsey, the regiment proceeded to Cephalonia, where the leisure of Mr. Champion was employed in studying the natural history of the country, and thus reviving the taste which had never left him, even in the midst of the severe duties of Sandhurst. Entomology and botany, especially the former, were his favourite pursuits, and his journals show that he pursued them in the true spirit of a man of science. The papers, published in England from observations made at this time, are still full of interest, and indicate the turn he had for original observation. His entomological friends speak of the “large collections of all orders from the Ionian Islands.”—(*Edinb. Philos. Journal*, April 1855.) Of his discoveries there the following notice was also taken by the President of the Entomological Society in his annual address in the beginning of 1855 :—

“Twenty years ago he was well known to the readers of the ‘Entomological Magazine,’ under the pseudonym of ‘Ionicus,’ by his admirable papers on the economy of certain Cephalonian insects, published in the third volume of that journal ; it is true that some of the statements there published related to facts previously familiar to entomologists, yet described with great care and evident originality ; others—for instance, the fact that *Brachinus græcus* explodes with its mouth, I have not seen elsewhere. ‘On the approach of danger,’ wrote the author, ‘this insect salivates, and a bubble appears at its mouth ; on contact with the air it explodes with

a considerable report, and gaseous matter may be seen rising up like smoke : . . . on being immersed in boiling water to kill it, it let off one of these explosions, and the water for about an inch around it effervesced much in the same manner as a Seidlitz powder.' . . . Major Champion's scientific papers are as follows:—Notes on various Insects. By Ionicus. Ent. Mag. iii. 176, *id.* 376, *id.* 460.'—(*Zoologist*, March 1855.)

In May, 1835, he purchased his lieutenancy.

Ireland was the next station of the 95th. In October, 1838, the regiment sailed from Cork for Ceylon, Mr. Champion having, by that time, purchased his company.

The following extract from his Journal of this date paints vividly the impression made upon his mind by departure for foreign service. "1838, Oct. 8. I was superintending the stowage of the men's arms and accoutrements in the hold of the steamer at Warren Point, when the band struck up 'Sweet Home' and 'Auld Langsyne,' and the *Earl of Roden* got up her steam. I rushed on deck, saw the colours flying on the poop, the depôt waving their hands, and the crowd cheering. She started, and our men gave them loud and manly huzzas. In the bustle and excitement, and the vivid future of expected pleasure in novelty, all appeared to forget what they left behind. I can answer for myself, that the pride which I felt in the Derbies—the manly pride which made our men march as steadily in the ranks for four miles as if going to a parade, without one single instance of intoxication, obliterated all soft impressions—I never felt so thoroughly a soldier."

It was on the departure of the regiment for Ceylon, that Captain Champion commenced his correspondence with those distinguished naturalists, whose acquaintance speedily ripened into intimacy and friendship. No one knew better than himself how advantageous it is for a military man, in peaceful quarters, to have some means of occupying his leisure on the outside of the narrow circle of regimental duties ; and in his favourite natural history he found the pleasure and employment that he sought. It was thus, as he relates in his Journal of the period, that he continued to baffle that arch enemy of military men, *ennui*. “How many hours of sickness,” he wrote, “have glided pleasantly and happily away by that means, which, without resources, must have left me cross and miserable. If, then, the sciences are not essential to our prosperity in the world, can we study them without, at various periods of our lives, being in situations where they reward us? Is it, indeed, an empty phrase, to talk of braving misfortunes with philosophy?”

By the advice and assistance of Dr. (now Sir William) Hooker, books and materials for forming a Botanical collection were purchased, as well as the usual apparatus required for other branches of Natural History, and he sent home several interesting letters and observations on these subjects.

In the Autumn of 1839 he was, however, obliged to relinquish these pursuits, and the pleasure he had anticipated in a foreign climate, having become utterly prostrated by fever, aggravated by a Mosquito bite in

the foot, which festered and became so formidable as to induce the surgeons to advise amputation. To this he would not consent, but he obtained leave of absence, and in the beginning of 1840 returned to England. The voyage and change of climate re-established his health, and gave him back the use of his foot, from which he never again suffered inconvenience.

It was during his long, long hours of suffering here, that the following note, so characteristic of his inner feelings, found its way into his Journal :—

“The recollections of past days crowd upon me—Dawlish, Craigston, and my aunt, in those scenes mingle in my imagination with all the Craigston family, and my sister, the little pet cherub that I defended once from the crummel cow.

“I was ever a faithful child in my affections, for I pined in secret for my father and mother until their return from the West Indies ; and when my aunt left Craigston I pined for her ; and in my after-life, love with either sex has not been a glove which I could cast off at convenience, as we too often see and experience in the cold world. Oh ! shall I ever forget the grief of that moment, or of succeeding years, when I saw my younger sister laid in her grave ; or the month of suspense and misery that, in more manly years, I passed at a still closer affliction ?* Then come the years of youth, when we learn to conceal our feelings, and to strengthen the powers of reason ; to temper the affections ; and to attach ourselves to those who seem

* The illness of his mother, which he heard of when in Corfu. He came home overland only to hear of her death a short time before his arrival.

best qualified to guide our abilities and actions into useful channels. How light and pleasant are those days! how happy and how *couleur de rose* seems the future! How prone, then, is the youthful spirit to abandon itself to mirth! how prone to folly! and how little are its follies restricted by the world! Lastly comes a manly change, which turns our former patrons (if I may so express it) into either friends or enemies, according as we resemble them in principles, or have assisted or thwarted some secret plan or secret foible. We are now less accessible, more forward in character, and more easily injured by yielding to our passions. We do not view the future with so much ardent expectation of good, or perhaps with so much anxiety, but our actions generally tend to future good; and who will not be thankful that misfortunes are viewed in that state calmly—at least, in general, those appertaining to self? Yet these youthful passions survive and strangely convulse life, strongly perverting our reasonable thoughts; and it is perhaps rarely, until the decay of our frail frames, that we have totally to banish love, ambition, avarice, or any of the great master-passions. It is when we begin to fail, when the body refuses its powers in forwarding the useful projects of our minds, that we lose the passions which have sprung up in society; find that life is, after all, but a trial; and that happiness is to be found in another world in the preparation we have made for it in this. This state is, then, content; and happy is he who can say he has found it!"

In the year 1841, Captain Champion married

Frances Mary, eldest surviving daughter of the late Captain David Carnegie, and she returned with him to Ceylon in the same year. Upon rejoining his regiment he remained for some time at Kandy; but eventually was placed upon the staff at Galle, and acted as staff-officer till the 95th was ordered to China.

During his residence at Galle he still continued to occupy, with natural history, all the leisure hours which his regimental duties afforded; with how much real success the papers left in the hands of friends abundantly prove. In June, 1844, he was interesting himself in the reorganisation of the Royal Botanic Garden at Peradenia, which had been newly placed under the direction of the late Mr. Gardner, a naturalist of rare talent, by whom, at a later date, a genus of plants was dedicated to him, under the name of *CHAMPIONA*. Captain Champion had, even at that time, been able to send to Dr. Wight, another eminent botanist, in charge of the East India Company's botanic garden and cotton estates, at Madras, between 600 and 700 species of plants collected by himself, many of which were before unknown; and he afterwards added largely to his acquisitions. In June, 1846, we find him describing two curious little genera of parasitical plants, which he had discovered, and which show that his power of quick observation enabled him to work, notwithstanding the want of a good microscope, in even the minute departments of botanical science. In an interesting article published in the *Edinburgh New Philosophical Journal*, for April 1855, and supposed to have been

contributed by a gentleman whose attainments in Natural History give his opinions great value, and whose intimacy with the subject of our memoir guarantees their exactness, it is said that "The then local Government of Ceylon saw with pleasure men of such ability occupied in investigating the natural productions of the country, and had it in contemplation to encourage and preserve these observations by publishing, at their expense and under their sanction, a Fauna or Physical History of the Island. Captain Champion was to have been intrusted with the Entomology and a share of the Botany, and amassed a vast amount of materials for this purpose. A large volume of carefully executed figures of insects was prepared by him, and a considerable number of drawings and dissections of plants. Unfortunately, the change of Government put a stop to this enlightened project, and the materials still remain unused. Let us hope that they may yet be made available to science." In this hope we cordially join. So far as Captain Champion could ensure such a result, he did so by generously dividing the very considerable number of plants he had examined, classified, and formed into an herbarium, among his friends, Mr. Bentham, Sir William Hooker, and Dr. Lindley.

Of the Ceylon collections in Entomology, some have been published by Mr. Westwood, among which is the *Callirhipis Championi* (Trans. of Ent. Soc. n. s. II. p. 235, pl. xii. fig. 2), and *Eugensis palpator* (Ib. p. 239, pl. xii. fig. 5). They also contained a new and curious species of Kirby's genus *Drepanocerus*, which Mr.

Westwood has named *D. Taprobanæ*, together with many smaller Coleoptera, which the same distinguished Entomologist has pronounced new to science.

Although occupied with Natural History, and similar pursuits, Captain Champion never neglected the duties of his profession, which were increased by his acting for some time as Judge Advocate. The testimony of those who knew him then, relates that no one understood regimental duty better. He was strict with the private soldier, as all good officers are; nevertheless, by his justice and consideration, he secured the respect and attachment of the troops. At the same time, his kind disposition, gentle manners, disregard of personal trouble, and assiduous discharge of the regimental affairs with which he was entrusted, won the affections of his brother officers.

One of his acts was, to reform the canteen system, which had been found highly prejudicial to the health of the troops; and this he effected with so much success, that the method has since been adopted in other regiments. The low-priced spirits of Hong Kong were most pernicious; high-priced beer was wholesome. His plan was, to raise the cost of the former, and to lower that of the latter. The men, under such altered circumstances, took readily to the beer: the consumption of spirits ceased in proportion, and the sanitary condition of the regiment improved.

In this island, Captain Champion had ample leisure for pursuing his favourite sciences, and nowhere did he attain more complete success. Among other remarkable objects, he succeeded in discovering one

of the most beautiful trees which even China produces, and which had been previously unknown to the Chinese themselves. Under the name of *RHODOLEIA CHAMPIONI*, given to it by his friend Sir William Hooker, it now exists in our gardens, and, when old enough to flower, will be superior in interest even to the *Camellia*. Before his investigations, the island had been only very superficially visited by botanists, and we had not above a couple of hundred species, chiefly from close around the town of Victoria and a little way up the Happy Valley. Captain Champion examined a great part of the island, although there is a portion of it which it is very dangerous to visit, on account of the pirates. During the life of Mr. Gardner, already mentioned as his scientific associate in Ceylon, descriptions of Captain Champion's Hong-Kong plants, partly prepared by himself and partly by Mr. Gardner, were sent to England, and published by Sir William Hooker in the first volume of his *Journal of Botany*. They evinced considerable knowledge of systematical Botany, and would have done honour to an experienced resident in Europe. Upon the premature death of Mr. Gardner, the collections were placed in the hands of Mr. Bentham, who faithfully reported the result of his examination in the same publication. Professor Lindley determined 33 species to belong to the curious race of Orchids, 11 of them being previously unknown or very slightly known. It ultimately appeared that the collection comprised 542 flowering species, out of which 136 were ascertained to be entirely new. Some of them, highly ornamental shrubs, have been intro-

duced by him to England. In addition to these were many ferns, now in the hands of Sir William Hooker, and, at present, undetermined, as well as the whole of his Grasses and Cyperaceous plants. Among these discoveries, one of the most interesting was the tree which produces the bony Chesnut-acorns sold in the markets of Canton, which had been called *Synædrys ossea*, and has more recently been referred, with questionable propriety, to the genus *Quercus*. A few of the results of his researches were eventually published by himself, with figures, in an excellent memoir, in the *Transactions of the Linnæan Society*, under the title of 'The Ternströmiaceous Plants of Hong Kong' (vol. xxi., p. 111).

The Entomological collections made in China were varied and valuable. Among other curious discoveries was that of as many as three new species of the singular family of *Paussidæ*, to which he gave the names of *Paussus sinicus*, *hystrix*, and *Bowringi*. These remarkable insects were captured on Victoria Peak, beneath stones, in the nests of a minute species of ant. The fact of the crepitation of the *Paussi* was fully confirmed by their discoverer, the explosive process having been found to resemble the ticking of a watch, and being accompanied by the emission of caustic vapour which discolours the finger when attempting to seize the insect. These insects were described in the Proceedings of the Linnean Society, June 19, 1849, by Mr. Westwood, by whom this and the following information has been obligingly communicated:—

“ Another remarkable little species captured near

Hong Kong is the *Clytellus Methocoides*, a small longicorn beetle, which I described in the Transactions as having very much the appearance of an ant, and which was taken upon the plant also discovered by Colonel Champion on Victoria Peak, and named by him *Eriobotrya chinensis*. Another new form among the Coleoptera, brought from Hong Kong, was the *Lichas funebris*, Westw. Tr. Ent. Soc. n. s. II., p. 238, pl. 12, f. 3, which, notwithstanding various peculiarities in its structure, appears nearest allied to the family Elateridæ. It was captured upon *Camellia assimilis* (*Champ.*), on Victoria Peak, and at Hong Kong. A new *Cicindela*, remarkable for the burnished coppery red patch on each elytron, was also taken by him in considerable numbers, as well as the *Helluo Asteriscus* (*White*), and *Macrocheilus Bensoni* (*Kirby*), as well as a very large assemblage of species of the other families of beetles. The other orders were also not neglected, especially the Hymenoptera and Lepidoptera, amongst which are various new kinds, belonging however to ordinary generic forms. The insects which he brought home from China were liberally distributed by him to the British Museum, and the Belfast Natural History Society (through Dr. Templeton); and various private collections were also enriched by this means."

Dr. Gray adds that 350 insects, chiefly Coleoptera, from Hong-Kong, were presented by their lamented discoverer to the British Museum. "Some of them," he states, "are described and referred to as presented by Colonel Champion, in the published Catalogues of the Museum."

While in Hong Kong the only military event which demands notice, was the command of a party sent up the country to ensure the execution of some Chinese criminals. The event itself is thus described in a letter from Captain (then Lieutenant) Sargent :—

Fifty men of “the light company of the 95th, under the command of Capt. Champion, with the late Lieutenant Swettenham and myself as its sub-alterns, was ordered to Canton in December, 1847, to protect the British factory from a threatened attack of the Chinese populace and village ‘braves,’ who had just murdered six of our merchants, and had placarded their intention of treating all Fan-kwei, or foreign devils, in the same way. Subsequently Sir John Davis ordered the party further up the river, to a village called Hwang-chu-kee, for the purpose of witnessing the execution of the murderers, who had been given up by the Chinese government. They had been sentenced to decapitation in front of their ancestral temple, in order to render the punishment the more degrading and effectual. The Chinese announced their intention of ‘chopping the party to pieces,’ and many thought it would hardly return in the face of the vast number of people who had collected about the place of execution, with the avowed determination of preventing the disgraceful punishment from being carried into effect. Even in Hong Kong matters appeared so serious, that a second Chinese war was apprehended.” This is mentioned for the purpose of showing that the duty was known to be one of considerable danger, requiring much judgment, fore-

thought, and coolness; for which reason Captain Champion had claimed as his right, as senior captain, to lead the expedition with his own company. The duty lasted for about a month; the sentence was carried into execution; and on the return of the detachment to Hong Kong, General D'Aguilar ordered the service that had been so well performed to be entered on the records of the regiment, which was done.

After a time it was found impossible to maintain the health of the troops in so hot and insalubrious a station as Hong Kong. Towards the end of 1849, fever broke out alarmingly, and carried the men off in great numbers. Captain Champion visited the hospital daily, and was unremitting in his kindness to the men. Eventually the 95th was ordered back to England, where it arrived in the autumn of 1850.

On the 17th November, 1851, Captain Champion obtained his brevet majority; and the same brevet making his colonel a general officer, he obtained his majority without purchase.

In 1853 he was with his regiment at Chobham, and there first, after twenty-three years service, learned to live under canvas, and became familiar with those rough duties of military life which he was soon to experience in a more extended field and under sterner circumstances.

CHAPTER III.

BULGARIA.

IN January, 1854, rumours became rife of an expedition to the East, and feelings were raised which few of the present generation had experienced. By March it was known that the 95th was to form part of the expeditionary force, and at last to enter in earnest into the service of their Queen and country. It was now that the dearest ties had to be broken, and the tenderest affections wrenched asunder. No one could have felt the sacrifice more acutely than Major Champion. But the soldier knows that his first duty is to his fatherland, and to that sacred obligation all social feelings must give way. Yet not entirely. How much less than entirely, the sequel of this short tale will tell.

On the 8th April, the 95th sailed from Portsmouth in a state of high efficiency, eager for distinction and buoyant with many-coloured hope. In the Journal for Easter Sunday the following passage occurs, and serves to show how unalterable were those devotional feelings with which he had started in early life. "This" wrote the gallant subject of our sketch, "ought to be a period of thought at all times, but still

more so now * * *. I often hope, and it has been my prayer this morning to our Heavenly Father, that the expedition we are engaged in may (although for the present hid from all but HIM) be the forerunner of the extension of Hrs dominion in the East."

On the 24th April the regiment after a prosperous voyage reached Scutari, where it disembarked to form a portion of Sir de Lacy Evans's Division in Colonel (now General) Pennefather's brigade, and was immediately put under canvas, which was soon found to be preferable to Turkish barracks swarming with every description of vermin. Major Champion in several letters expresses his astonishment at finding the general appearance of Constantinople so much like that of Canton; and his brother officers who had been in China were equally surprised. They found the drawings, the music, the taste in dress and houses bearing great resemblance in the two cases, and there was the same seclusion of the women. The Turks themselves were however seen to be a superior race, so far as could be judged from outward demeanour; and he thought that with a good religion they might become a good people.

After a long delay, owing as was supposed to defective Commissariat arrangements, or as some said to the incomplete state of the expedition in artillery and cavalry, the brigade was moved forward to Varna, where it disembarked on the 19th June, encamping near Varna lake in a pleasant plain surrounded by hills, and not unlike Chobham in appearance.

In a letter to Lieutenant-Colonel Alcock, formerly of

the 95th regiment, dated CAMP, VARNA, *June 26th*, 1854, we have the following pleasant sketches of military affairs :—

“The Guards and Highland brigade left Constantinople on the 13th inst. Sir De Lacy Evans’s division left on the 16th and two following days. The 95th, with a company of Sappers and General Pennefather and staff, were in that fine steamer the *Golden Fleece*. Sailing on the 17th, we passed Sunday on board, in Varna Bay: landed in the boats of the *Henri Quatre, vaisseau de Guerre*, and were played up by the French 27th band. We are camped on the *dos à dos* plan by companies near the lake, and have a good supply of water, but experience rather a deficiency of wood. The French are more handy soldiers than our men, and either take more readily to campaigning, or are more practised, but they are not equal in physical force. They and the English soldiers are excellent friends. The French, at least, rather affect to look down upon the Turks; but I certainly cannot do so, after their bearing the brunt of the war, and so nobly defending Silistria. There are four very fine Egyptian regiments at Varna. They are ill-clothed, but good-sized and robust soldiers, and manœuvre with precision—more steadily, I think, than some English regiments. Their system is, probably, too steady and slow. Yesterday, after Church service, Sir De Lacy Evans addressed our division with the news of the victory gained by the Turks at Silistria, which he says has relieved it, all the Russian outworks being destroyed. Great praise is

given to Captain Butler, of the Ceylon Rifles, who was serving in Silistria.

“ The Gallipoli division arrived on Saturday, and is landing to-day. They encamp beyond us on the same ground. The 4th has been left at Gallipoli and the 49th and 95th each left eighty-five men behind to keep Scutari barracks. A brigade-major of the 30th commands this depôt. Our Light division, under General Brown, is still at the end of the lake, nine miles off, at a place which some call Aladin and some Ondine, but I suppose neither is correct. Those, who have been there, describe very curious basaltic columns, so that the alluvial basin and limestone hills surrounding this lake must end at the head. The basin is much fuller than represented in your map, and very level. It must, evidently, once have been a large fresh water lake. The country is all covered with *Paliurus aculeatus* (Christ's Thorn,) and there appears to be good grounds for supposing that it really formed the crown woven for our Saviour at his crucifixion. The plain is covered with Cardoon Thistles. Barley is cultivated in vineyards, and there are orchards of walnuts, pears, plums, peaches, and apricots, also maize and melons, but no olives nor Caroube trees. The curious Hungarian Lethrus beetle is very common, and I have specimens of *Calosoma Sycophanta*. At Constantinople I got the splendid Crimean *Procerus tauricus*. Hares abound here, and a species of marmot, or ground squirrel, is very common. The forenoons are very hot, usually tempered by a sea breeze; the climate dry, and the evenings and mornings charming, but the

nights cold and damp, with dew. Bathing in the lake is a favourite amusement with all classes.

“I send you a very slight sketch of our position, done by the eye from my tent. We expected to have moved on to attack the Russians, but no one knows now what plan will be adopted, as the relief of Silistria is considered of great strategetic importance.

“Varna is a very poor place, and by no means strong, except defended by men of war, but the plain in front of it is admirably adapted for a field of battle. Provisions are bad and dear, except poultry. We are supplied by English ships and French shops, but it is very difficult to get on board, as there are no caïques, or passenger boats. The war is evidently felt here, and there are few people in the town, except peasantry, who for the most part seem to have sent away their families.

“I have a *Naval and Military Gazette* to-day, for which I think I am indebted to you. General Forey (who commanded the French troops at the Piræus and was at Constantinople) inspected the 95th one afternoon before we left, and was much pleased with us. The 50th was the first regiment of the division from Gallipoli.”

In the beginning of July the regiment had moved to Gutchukiva, of which the following account is given in a letter to his sister.

“Our camp is on a charming hill about fifteen miles from Varna, and two or three from the upper Devna lake,—with wood all round it and a running stream of water. We can see the camp of the Guards and High-

landers between Varna and us, and we see Varna on one side, and a long way towards Schumla on the other. The formation is limestone, which makes pretty scenery over the lake, and three miles off there are curious caves and columns (by some taken for basalt), which grow up into pillars, and some people fancy them the remains of a cyclopean town, which is a mistake. Our camp is considered the most picturesque of the three, and almost every tent has now a large arbour in front of it, where we dine and breakfast. I have a large one built of oak. I quite enjoy this country (when the day is not too hot), and wander about the woods here as you would do in a gentleman's place in England; but we have hard work to get provisions." (*July 8, 1854.*)

At a later period the 95th was quartered successively at Devna, Yuhoukova, and Kostandji, small Bulgarian places. Of what passed during this period, sketches are given in letters, from which the following extracts are selected.

"CAMP NEAR KOSTANDJI, *3rd August, 1854.*—We are two marches from Zuksuva, having gone to a place called Soombay on the 1st, and are now encamped on a hill eastward of the town of Kostandji. There is a very extensive view up the country from our camp, and we can see many miles beyond Paravady, and mark its mountain passes on the Balkan range,—an extensive plain running from Kostandji in this direction. One range of hills is continued, and forms an elevated plateau towards the Danube, and seems to be a rich uninteresting country, full of hazel and oak copse, or

fields of barley, which the villagers are now reaping. All the Bulgarian villages are much the same, having one or two houses or cottages whitewashed and tiled, the rest are hovels made of basket-work, wattled with mud. Sometimes a wicker-work enclosure carried all round the hut acts as a defence against marauders.

“The national taste for good water continues, and each stream of water is guided into fountains, so that the country is well supplied, and a mile seldom passes without finding one or two of these structures. Some of the villages are better inclined to us than others, and sell more liberally, but there is always great difficulty in making purchases, as the men are usually working in the fields, and the women shut themselves up, and will not come forward to barter. The sutlers to the army provide very few things, principally bad spirits or bad wine at exorbitant prices; and it seems astonishing that there should be so little enterprise in supplying troops at so short a distance from Varna. As for the Commissariat, they have made no arrangements for the carriage of the porter and other stores which were sent from England for the use of the troops, which would have been both seasonable and invaluable for the health of the regiment. During the last two days at Zuksuva cholera broke out badly in our regiment, and we have lost seven or eight men with it and fever. The 55th lost one officer, Mr. Greig, and our division had a great loss in our Adjutant-General, Colonel L. Maule, a brother of Lord Panmure. His case was soon a fatal one. I brought him the proceedings of a district court-martial upon Monday forenoon;

he told me to give them to Captain Lane Fox, who was doing his duty for the day; two hours after this he sent for laudanum and calomel, and towards night his case was reported as cholera, and his life entirely despaired of; he died very early yesterday morning. I am rather glad we have left the neighbourhood of the lakes, as it is considered by the natives unhealthy during the summer season. The troops about Varna have been unhealthy, and so have the Light Division, the Guards, and Highlanders. I think we caught it from the draught, who lay at Varna for a few days."

"CAMP NEAR KOSTANDJI, 19th August, 1854. (To the Rev. Augustus Noel, formerly a brother officer.)—We have been kept all this time in Bulgaria without seeing the enemy, in a sort of Chobham affair, and latterly moving about to escape cholera and fever, which has decimated the efficiency of the force we had upon first arrival at Varna. Now at last we are likely to see some active service, and regiments will be embarked next week to an unknown destination, but generally supposed to be Sebastopol. This country is much more like England than Italy, but the summer is very hot, and on the 9th of this month we rejoiced in the temperature of 102° Fahr. under shade of our canvas. The country would be magnificent with English tillage. I do not know how far we can judge of the peasantry in our present position, as their transactions are entirely restricted to the sale of poultry and vegetables. They are extremely rude and uncivilised.

"Kostandji, the City of Minarets, lies at our feet in

the plain about two miles off. It is the largest town in this neighbourhood, and consists of about 30 tiled cottages and perhaps 800 hovels. A dirty little ditch meanders through the town, and near it are several fountains with excellent water. A small Bazaar exists near the principal mosque, and under a large tree are various solemn looking Osmanli inhaling the weed.

“The hovels are made of wickerwork, mud, and wattles, with several out-houses. These have neither windows nor chimneys, and are made of basketwork. The whole is surrounded by a hurdle breast-work, answering the double purpose of defence, and a poultry-yard.

“Here chibouk-bearing Turks abound, and females wrapped up in yashmaks. The visits of the officers to this town usually combine the useful with any other motives, consequently they go on poney-back, with a haversack across their shoulders and money in hand. *Ymurtak Kats-karouch* ? how much do you charge for eggs. *Ymurtak yok*, no eggs. *Casse yusc yok*. *Yok, yok, yok*, get about your business. This is the usual answer, until at last a civil man or more obliging lady professes him or herself willing to barter.

“It is obvious from this that the true believers are not very fond of us, and only respect us in the more civilised town of Stamboul. In the Greek villages they are still more hostile, and it is not very safe to go unarmed. In the Bulgarian villages they are also at first very shy, doubtless having suffered from the marauding propensities of the Bashi-bazooks, but

upon further acquaintance they become very ready to barter, and one intelligent Bulgarian confidentially told me 'English bono; Osmanli non bono; Moskoff bono, Christiani.' In this village the men wear the Bulgarian cap and garb. The women a Sclavonian dress of blue stuff with coloured fringes, and a zone with brass clasp round the waist. They come willingly forward and barter with you. It is evident that they only respect us from being Christians, and doubtless think it very strange we should be at war with the Russ.

"The Bulgarians seem very ignorant, but well-behaved and fond of agriculture. The Turks behave well, but have a government and religion which would prevent any improvement. The Greeks are a disaffected, intriguing, Russian-loving set of rogues.

"You will ere this have heard of the fire at Varna, effected through the disaffected Greeks in the Russian pay, and who had previously distinguished themselves by firing at and even assassinating British soldiers, whenever they had the opportunity.

"The lake country was far more beautiful than that in our neighbourhood, but we have an extensive view from our camp over the immense plain as far as Yenibazaar, our cavalry outpost. There are large flocks of sheep, horses, and cows, about this, and much barley and Indian maize.

"We don't hear much of Major Nasmyth. Some of our officers, in going to Silistria, had ocular demonstration of the way in which a Turkish officer robbed the peasantry, but I doubt not that Omar Pacha is improving their morals very much, and in that instance the

depredator received personal chastisement from the cat-o-nine-tails."

CAMP NEAR KOSTANDJI, 23rd *August*, 1854. (To Lieutenant-Colonel Alcock.) "Colonel C—— passed this two days ago, having been then one day from Schumla, and only two from Giurgevo, and told one of the officers, that the Russians are now in retreat across the Pruth, and that the Czar appears to be coming to terms ; that Omar Pacha thinks there will be nothing more done, at any rate this season, and probably peace proclaimed. Our long talked of expedition (notwithstanding this) is not as yet countermanded, and the grey and chesnut batteries of artillery attached to our brigade marched this morning to Varna for embarkation. From the number of gabions made by the troops, for each of which fourteen pence was paid to the maker, and shipped on board the transports, siege operations on an extensive scale are expected, and Sebastopol is the common talk. Our destination remains a secret. I believe all the troops will be embarked by the 28th or 29th, and we are daily expecting to leave. This August was nearly as hot here at its commencement as it is in Greece, and on the 9th the thermometer in the hill tents stood at 102°. The consequence was that cholera, which had commenced about the time I wrote to you last, committed great ravages throughout the camp, and through it and other diseases I expect that one tenth of the army was unfit for service four days ago. Now the heat has left, autumn and rain have commenced, and the sick daily

improve in health ; but a great many men have died. We have lost about 24 men since we left England (19 or 20 through cholera), and the 7th Fusiliers had lost 35 men four days ago. A week ago we had 80 men in hospital, and 20 more convalescents unfit for active service. All the other regiments of our division have been brought to Turkey, from either Gibraltar and Malta, and have been singularly free from disease ; probably being acclimatised. The 30th only lost 3 men (2 from cholera), and the 55th 2 officers and 3 men ; and they had only from 50 to 60 men each unfit for service. The 5th Dragoon Guards have suffered most of any corps, and the Guards and Highland Brigade and Light Division, especially the 33rd and 7th Fusiliers. The 50th, most in Sir Richard England's own Brigade, and one Artillery Battery. My own opinion of cholera, from what I have seen, is that it is infectious and contagious, and we caught it through our draught from England from Varna, as our first two cases occurred in the draught two days after their arrival, and both proved fatal. After losing 8 or 9 men, our brigade was moved to a place called Soombay, and we lost a man an hour after we came in, and had two more cases that day. Next day we moved to this, and lost men until the disease worked itself out, and now appears to have left us. All our stations have been apparently very healthy, and every sanitary measure has been attended to. The Light Division was decidedly in unhealthy ground, and improved after it moved to its present station between Devna and Paravady. We are on the hills towards Varna, above

and about 2 miles from Kolidschi, on the large map, and have an extensive view instead of the Balkan hills, and an immense plain stretching as far as Yeni-bazaar. Hills here form an undulating plateau, extending towards the Danube, and are rich in corn and maize-fields, with park-like grazing grounds, and low stunted woods, principally oak, with large pear trees, of two kinds, bearing incredible fruit, and a crab apple. Our other brigade is at Soombay.

“I fear your two sisters and yourself kindly did my sketch far too much honour; for it was a mere scrawl. If we go to any place of interest, I will endeavour to give you more detail.

“P.S. You will have all the details of the fire at Varna. It is evident there are Greeks here in the Russian interest, who fired the town, and are likely the same who when the camp was at Varna lived in the woods about Galata, and attempted to assassinate soldiers of the artillery stationed there. A soldier of the 41st was assassinated and left for dead by two Bashi-bazouks, who had robbed him of his money. The Turkish nations dislike us as *giaours*, but are perfectly inoffensive. The Bulgarians like us pretty well as Christians, but do not seem to like our assisting the Turks. They are perfectly distinct, for the Turks in physiognomy are evident Slavonians.”

“CAMP NEAR KOSTANDJI, 27th August, 1854.—Since I last wrote preparations have been hurried on, and they make no secret of the expedition to the Crimea,

which will be conducted on a very large scale, including French, English, and Turks.

“It is supposed that we land within seven miles of Sebastopol, and that the enemy will impede our disembarkation as far as possible. We carry with us the means of entrenching ourselves, and shall have rough work of it till we take the place. Many of us will doubtless never return from this expedition, and it were folly to shut one’s eyes to this, or for me to suppose that you can be otherwise than very anxious until this affair is over; but be of good cheer, my dearest wife, and do not fear to look the danger in the face, remembering that all things are in His hands and of His good will; I trust that He who has brought me in health through the pestilence, will also bring me through those dangers to return to you and our dear children in safety; but if it is His good will that I do not return, you must not grieve, but remember that one can die with as sincere faith on the battle-field as in a more downy bed, and that we have the same hope. But I have not sat down to anticipate evil, and it is our duty under all trials (and I would recommend it to you) to take a calm, cheerful, and bright, view of the future, with our hearts full of love to God for all His present mercies. For myself, my mind feels so calm, that I am grateful to have much leisure, and no thoughts but those of happiness in thinking that we have only parted because it was a duty, and may look forward with hope to the time when we shall meet again.

“The weather has cleared up, and become as hot as

an English summer. The cholera in our brigade is apparently over, and the number in hospital has dwindled from eighty-two to forty-five, so that in all probability we shall not leave behind more than sixty men unfit for work ; and the General says, our division will be among the healthiest of the army."

" OFF BALTSCHIK, 3rd September, 1854, Sir Robert Sale Transport.—We had a very fatiguing day yesterday, breaking up camp at three o'clock in the morning, and marching to Point Galeta. The Colonel embarked with the Grenadiers and band in the *Pyrenees* transport, and gave me the rest of the regiment to embark on board the screw man-of-war steamer *Inflexible*. This is a good ship, although coarsely fitted up ; and I was astonished to find how much I enjoyed the luxuries of even a small vessel like this after camp life. A good table and firm seats were generally appreciated, and as to fare, white bread and English butter seemed extraordinary delicacies. Sleep undisturbed by the neighing and fighting of camp ponies was delightful. Before embarking yesterday, Sir G. Brown's aide-de-camp told us, that we should land so far from Sebastopol, that they hoped to effect a landing without fighting. He says that our numbers have been exaggerated, and that we shall not have more than 60,000 in all ; and at present embark about 23,000 English, about 24,000 French, and 7000 Turks ; but a second reinforcement of our heavy cavalry and of French troops will follow. The navy here say our fleet, when all assembled, will amount to about 900 vessels of all

kinds, and will be the largest fleet ever assembled. All the large men-of-war, with a very few exceptions, are lying off this port, and look very imposing. Baltschik is a wretched dirty little town. It is not intended now that the fleet should leave this place before Tuesday next. The French seem less advanced in embarkation than we are. I expect we shall meet with great difficulties and hardships upon landing, on account of baggage, as our baggage-animals have been left behind to come on some weeks hence. Colonel W. came on board yesterday to say that our chargers had gone to Baltschik by the wrong ships, and would have to be transferred to the *Fernandia*."

CHAPTER IV.

THE CRIMEA.

ON the 7th of September the magnificent fleet of the allies left Baltschik with its gallant freight full of impatience to commence operations ; on the 12th it was off the Crimea with all the land from Sebastopol to Eupatoria in sight ; the weather as rainy, stormy, and cold as in October in England.

On the 11th Major Champion, in a letter to Colonel Alcock, describes the then state of the expedition in the following words :

“ I am here (on board the *Sir Robert Sale*) with our Light Company, 121 strong ; and Quartermaster and Captain Barthby’s demi-field-battery of artillery ; 65 men, 58 horses, 2 guns. We left Baltschik on the 7th, and are, I suppose, the most magnificent invading fleet on record, but our number, not more than 60,000, appears to me to be too small for such an undertaking. I have been able to get an official programme of the transport sailing order which will give you a good idea of the English portion, not including the fleet, in which there are three three-deckers, the *Britannia*, *Queen*, and *London*. Lord Raglan is in the *Caradoc*.

Heads of divisions are in front, the light division taking the left, the first, second, third, and fourth, and then the French transports. The other ships follow the heads of their divisions, so that we may call ourselves a mass of contiguous columns, left in front. On starting we steamed out with a fair wind at four and a half knots an hour, and were in pretty compact order the next day, having had full moon at night. But the day after, with change of weather and a dark night, we were very straggling and going at two and three quarter knots an hour, and it took six or seven hours to assemble at our place of rendezvous. An active enemy (not afraid to fight our men-of-war) might have annoyed us much and damaged our troop-ships. The anchoring of such a large fleet in the midst of the ocean without any appearance of land around has struck every one as something quite novel, but I cannot myself understand the advantages of such procrastination, or why we were not brought direct to our landing place from Baltschik."

On the 14th the troops landed without opposition, and marched some miles into the country, when they bivouacked on a large plain, well adapted for fighting, but without wood, and badly supplied with water. It was dark when they halted, and lay down in quarter distance column, ready to deploy into a general line if required. It rained very hard at intervals during the night, but the next day was hot and sunny so that the the army had everything dried. In a letter dated the 16th, he writes thus to his wife:—

"I went to a village some miles off, and foraged; we

are very particular in paying the inhabitants for everything we get, but the French had plundered and destroyed almost everything. They came into a house where B. and I were, and made the people give them provisions, for which they paid nothing. I asked them, if they were not going to pay, and they only laughed. Such is war. I have stood the two nights very well, and am quite well and strong this morning, with a fine day before us. If we can only get our tents and horses we shall be quite comfortable, but it is hard work sleeping in the open air and heavy dews, and to carry bedding on the line of march. Yesterday I had nothing to wash with, and had ditchwater to drink. To-day both washed and had better water. One feels thankful to God, and a sincere love for His kindness, to have been made a hardy soldier. As I think I told you before, be of good heart, and pray for me, as I do that He will be my protection and hope, whether in life or death; I assure you we cannot be unhappy when we trust in his goodness. May God bless you and our dear children! I have much comfort in thinking of you."

And now approached the beginning of that mighty struggle, which, we hope, is to repay us for all our melancholy losses by emancipating the Eastern Christians, while it paralyses for ever the barbarous power that, under the plea of religion, is stealing onwards in search of universal dominion. Neither the 95th nor any one of its officers, except Dr. Gordon, had ever been under fire; many of the men were little better than raw recruits; all they knew of a soldier's life was the easy duty of a garrison, or the slight discomforts of a

peaceful camp. Wounds, sickness, cold, hunger, and death were close at hand, but not one gallant heart shrunk from the encounter. They felt that the eyes of the world were turned upon the mighty expedition of which they formed a part, and they resolved to show themselves worthy of it, and of the well-loved country that had sent them forth. At the Alma they were to receive their military baptism, and a bloody one it proved.

On the 20th of September, six days after landing, the allies attacked the enemy in a position which would have been impregnable to other troops. In three hours a river was forded, a plain passed in the face of batteries which had ascertained the range of every object, heights bristling with cannon and swarming with old troops were triumphantly carried, the enemy's position was stormed, and the great force on which the Czar had relied for the extermination of the invaders dissolved into an armed multitude flying from the field it had lost.

In this memorable action the 95th were most conspicuous, and their loss enormous: only exceeded by that of the 23rd; out of twenty-six officers who went into the action, only eight came out of it unwounded. It was the Derbies who first entered the Russian batteries and captured the only gun that was not carried off, no cavalry having followed up the victory in pursuit.* The first hurried lines received by Mrs. Champion after the event tell the story briefly:—

* It has been generally said that the late Lieut-Colonel Pakenham, a most gallant officer of the Grenadier Guards, was the first to lay his hands

“21st September, 1854.—Thank God, I am safe and well. We had fearful work yesterday at the Battle of the Alma. Six officers killed and twelve wounded. I stuck to the colours to the last, and by the mercy of God repulsed the enemy, though reduced to merely ten or twelve of our men near me. The Colonel, I am sorry to say, is wounded, and *I took the regiment out of action.*”

The following is a copy of the report made by Major Champion to Brigadier General Pennefather on this occasion, taken from a draught in pencil, found among Colonel Champion's papers—

“BIVOUACK BELBEK,
“Sept. 20th, 1854.

“SIR,

“The 95th regiment having lost the valuable services of Lieut.-Colonel Webber Smith, who was wounded after passing the river Alma, it devolves upon me as next senior officer to bring forward to your notice for the information of the Lieut.-General, commanding the 2nd division, the names of officers, non-commissioned officers, and soldiers who particularly distinguished themselves in the action of the 20th.

“Where all behaved well it is difficult to commemorate individual prowess, but I shall feel favoured by your recommendation of the services of Major H. Hume, who after crossing the river had a horse shot under him, headed the attack upon the Russian main

upon this trophy ; but it is now admitted that Major Heyland, with some of the 95th, had preceded the Guards, although eventually forced to relinquish their hold of the piece.

outwork and carried the colours of the regiment during the hardest struggle. He received a shot through his epaulette producing contusion. To his valuable assistance in extending a firm front to the enemy, whilst pressed in large bodies in front and flank, I feel greatly indebted for the prominent place you found the regiment in at the crisis of victory. Brevet Major Heyland, I regret to say, was severely wounded after having gallantly pressed forward to his left in the outworks, and taken a 32-pound brass howitzer from the enemy. Lieut. Macdonald received a concussion on the chest from a rifle bullet, which remains lodged in the ornament of his light company accoutrement.* Ensign Brooke continued to press on in the midst of the hardest struggle after receiving a wound whilst carrying the colours, which must have greatly disabled him, and only left the field after the crisis of the day. To Capt. Davis (who received the colours from Major Hume after his epaulette was struck), to Captain Sargent and Lieut. Morgan (grenadiers), I feel much indebted for determined bravery.

“I have to regret the loss of the valuable services by death of Capt. Dowdall, Capt. Eddington, Lieut. E. Eddington, Lieut. Polhill, Lieut. and Adjutant Kingsley, all most deserving officers. Lieut. Eddington was killed by my side and had just sustained another wound. Ensigns Bazalgette and Braybrook were wounded whilst carrying the colours; Capt. Wing,

* Lieut. now Capt. Macdonald was dangerously hurt at Inkerman having received sixteen bayonet wounds, but is recovering. He acted as Adjutant to Major Champion after Alma.

Lieut. Garrard, Ensign Boothby were all wounded in the meritorious discharge of their duties. Lieut. Braybrooke, Ceylon Rifles, is most dangerously wounded.

“Surgeon Gordon was at one time in great peril of life. The regiment is greatly indebted to him for his strenuous exertions in attending to the wounded, and the advantage of his experience in former campaigns. He speaks favourably of the assistant surgeons of the regiment, who assisted him in the care of the wounded.

“The general behaviour of the 95th regiment immediately under fire I would particularly bring to your notice the names of”

(Here the paper is so much defaced, that it cannot be read.)

“Having already forwarded the nominal list of killed and wounded,

“I have the honour to be, &c.”

Some personal details, given in subsequent letters, will be read with the deepest interest. The passages which have been selected show how unflinching was his courage, how firm his faith in a superintending Providence, and how sincere his regard for the brother-officers he had loved so well, and so suddenly lost.

“BALAKLAVA, 27th September, 1854.—This day last week the great battle of the Alma was fought, and you would receive a few lines from me after the action. Our Colonel has gone to Scutari, so that I have been in command since, and the General has been kind enough to say, that he has mentioned both Hume and

myself favourably for our conduct during the battle. The Russians were commanded by Prince Menschikoff, and lost 6,000 killed and wounded. Since then the campaign has been a hard one—we have outmanœuvred the enemy without coming to actions of any great consequence. A most fatiguing march two days ago forced Prince Menschikoff on Simpheropol, and placed us on the southern side of Sebastopol at this place, which we took almost without opposition, and are now landing our siege train; it is supposed that Sebastopol will be taken without much difficulty from its rear, and our endeavours will be to do so before the Russian army at Perekop joins Prince Menschikoff. The Russians seem much discouraged at their defeat; they expected to have held the Alma for three weeks against us in place of three hours. Our army loses a great many hands daily from sickness and the hardships of our bivouack life, but we have got into a good country now, full of ripe grapes, of which we pull and eat as many as we like, and we have excellent water. How truly glad I shall be to hear of you again, my dearest wife; may the Almighty, who has been so kind, protect you from all harm."

"Bivouack, SEBASTOPOL, 3rd October, 1854.—You may conceive my joy at a mail, and receiving no less than four letters; I wish I could write, but I am still as I was, and cannot even get paper for official letters and returns. We have been landing our siege train for the last week, the troops meanwhile investing the place just out of shelling range on a hill. I got an

excellent view of the whole of Sebastopol when on piquet the other day; the garrison are busy throwing up new batteries, and attempt to shell us every day. I think the place will be taken in four or five days after the siege commences, but we shall lose a good many men. I think our brigade is too weak to bear the brunt of this affair as it did at the Alma. You must be of good heart, and remember that nothing can happen to me but of the good will of the Almighty, who has already guided me in safety through so much danger and pestilence. All the old general officers say they never saw hotter fire than at Alma, and all our officers in the 95th think their preservation most wonderful and providential; Major Hume's epaulette was shot through, and Macdonald carries a minie bullet which struck and lodged in his light company's ornaments just on his breast. My arm was black and blue next day from the fragment of a shell; twice large shot fell close to me, covering me with dirt, and a soldier saw another ball go within an inch of my head. The showers of minié balls I went through untouched seems to me a most providential escape. Captain Dowdall had his arm carried off by a cannon-ball, and breast shattered; he died before night. Captain Eddington was shot through the throat by a rifle-bullet, and died shortly after; his brother was killed by my side, shot through the head, and died instantaneously, with the sweetest smile imaginable. Polhill was killed by grape-shot, much disfigured. Poor Kingsley shot through the head, but lived a short time in great pain; he was my chum latterly, and I


regret him much, as a fine soldier and pleasant person. Colonel Braybrooke's son, in the Ceylon Rifles (attached to us), had his leg amputated from the hip-joint, and died some days after the amputation.

"General Pennefather, has, I believe, reported favourably both of myself and Major Hume. He told me the other day I was very fortunate in leading the regiment out of action, and that he hoped it would give me my brevet Lieutenant-Colonelcy, and make me a C.B. I told General Pennefather, that we had not yet finished, and that perhaps I might not survive Sebastopol; and I begged of him, if anything happened to me, he would interest himself for you and my children; he was very kind, and said I should find a friend in him. You must not suppose from this that I anticipate misfortune. I put my full confidence in God; He has saved me in every way, and has given me a cheerful disposition through every privation and hardship. Here is the Drum-major for our letters. May God bless you."

In a letter, dated Oct. 11, to his brother, Captain Champion of the 24th Bombay Native Infantry, he enters into further particulars of so much interest, that it is printed without alteration, notwithstanding some repetitions.—"I have long intended to send you a detailed account of the Battle of the Alma, but I have been always interrupted. We left our night bivouack, expecting to find the enemy on the Alma, and were halted towards nine or ten o'clock, and lay down in a hot sun till twelve o'clock. A little before one o'clock we were on the heights above the Alma, and deployed into

double line, the First Division in front of us. We continued to advance until we got past the line of the First Division, and found ourselves within range of the enemy's batteries, ^{L & H} and had several men killed; we were then ordered to lie down, and a stunning fire of round shot, grape, and shell kept playing upon us. Here Dowdall had his arm carried off by grape-shot, and died at night; eight or ten minutes after the Grey Battery attached to us came to the opening to our right, and played from where we were on the battery across the bridge, and this brought the whole fire of the enemy right over my head on the right of the line, and I lay momentarily expecting that my head would be carried off, but, by the mercy of God, I escaped: one shot was within an inch of my head, two dashed the earth all over me, and my arm was blackened by the fragments of a shell. The Grey Battery, upon the whole, got the worst of it. After lying nearly twenty minutes, we got word to advance. The fire became terrific, and the right got under cover, and lay down under a wall. ¹² The three right companies I directed to dash under a ruined house, where I found General Pennefather and the 55th. We then lost sight of the rest of the line, but upon its advancing, ^{at the wall} both the 55th and my companies deployed into line, and the 95th crossing a fearful fire of grape and musketry from the open causeway, got under the wall with the rest of the line, and lay down by mistake. I went with a few men of the 55th under ³ and again crossed the terrific fire, and lay down with my regiment. How I escaped I cannot tell, as the bullets were in showers.

Soon after this, Sargent and others headed the men over the wall, and we went through a heavy fire down the bank, and through the rivulet, which, although narrow, came up to my waist. One or two men with picks and ammunition were weighed down and drowned (perhaps shot also), and a great many men had their ammunition quite damaged and wetted. I got up a very steep clay bank with some difficulty, and found the 95th and 23rd all mixed up together, sheltered under a very steep hill. Here I saw our colonel and colours, and got up the bank a little above them. Both the 23rd and 95th hung back a little, and did not seem inclined to face the fire they must meet on the crest of the hill. A few recruits were firing from the river at random over the hill, although their fire touched nothing. A cry now came that the enemy were coming down the hill, and would fire into us. I called energetically upon the men to get up to the crest and fire over, and step back and reload: both regiments hung back. "Come, 95th, show them the way!" A rush then took place; and our men, instead of waiting on the crest, dashed on through a withering fire. Here the Colonel was wounded, the two Eddingtons and Polhill killed, Wing wounded, and a great slaughter of our men. Young Eddington fell by my side with a most sweet expression. I saw little more, but pressed on, and got into the battery to our left, from which the enemy were driven by our advance. There was a fine brass howitzer deserted by the enemy, and which Heyland had first taken, keeping a little to our right. I rejoined our colours with a line of 300 to 400 of the 95th, the 23rd

fighting to our right. The rest of our men joined the 23rd and 7th, both near us. We fired into a fine regiment (the 31st Imperial Guard) on our front. The slaughter on both sides was terrific ; then we were also taken in flank by the Russian 32nd, and their cross-fire dealt destruction to the 23rd and ourselves. Several regiments were fighting to our right. At length they retired, and the 23rd and ourselves reluctantly and last retired also ; but a strong relief of regiments in *échelon* on the left was advancing to our succour. Hume seized a colour and fronted, and every officer with us did what was in his power to rally the men. Some fifty fine fellows crowded round the colours. We had five sergeants shot with them, and four officers wounded. The 7th lost one of their colours for some minutes. We stood firm, but a charge from the enemy must have annihilated us. The enemy was cowed. There was a strong wall of Guards and Highlanders advancing to our relief. The First Division Guards, Scōtch Fusileers, I believe, on the left were up first, and we let them pass us, but they could not stand the withering fire, and retreated back to us. The other battalions came up proudly as a rock, and the enemy reeled under their fire. A Guardsman beckoned to our handful to fill up a gap between two regiments of Guards ; when we did, the enemy retired, and we all followed : the victory was ours. Then we were all, officers and men, shaking hands, for our escape seemed to be beyond our most sanguine hopes. General Pennefather came up, and we cheered him. We then advanced up the hill,  the Horse Artillery playing on the retreating columns

of the enemy. Their rout was complete, and they retired at once on Simpheropol, leaving us to bury their dead and take care of their wounded. I remember passing over the heaps of slaughtered Russians where the 31st (Russians) had been mostly shot through the head. I never saw the field in cool blood, for my duties kept me quite a prisoner to camp for the two following days, and I am glad of it. We all assembled on the plain above the heights and cheered Lord Raglan; and were marched back to position on the west of the Sebastopol side of the Alma. I know very little what the French did, except that they took their part. * * * The Russians say they expected us to fight like men, but that we fought like devils. The enemy had the ranges of their guns fixed up above the Alma."

From the battle of the Alma till the 26th October, the correspondence relates chiefly to little events of camp life.

"BIVOUACK, NEAR SEBASTOPOL, 7th October, 1854.—Great was my joy when on picquet yesterday to get your letter of the 17th September. Nothing particular has occurred since I wrote last. Our division has been moved from the extreme left near the sea to the extreme right—a move we do not like, as the water is distant and muddy; no grapes, and constant annoyance from the enemy's fire and picquets—our picquets being much harassed both by day and night. You may fancy that we are all very tired and anxious for the siege, having slept nightly in the clothes we landed in, booted and spurred, and red-coats. Two days ago we got tents,

which makes a great difference to our health, and I feel really well to-day, although just off picquet, with a very heavy dew last night. I had an attack of diarrhœa last week, which I cured by eating of rice plentifully; and I have succeeded in getting a bottle of curry-powder and a tin of hare-soup from the ships, which will be of great use in case of illness. I am trying to get a bottle of wine. I get on rather badly on salt-pork days, but they now give us plenty of rice, and this can be eaten with curry, ration brown sugar, and rum. I take coffee in the morning, but cannot drink the tea, and eat very little of the biscuit. When they give us mutton it makes soup and meat, which is really nourishing. We are under arms from an hour before sunrise.

“*Evening.*—Our mail is to be made up to-night. The Russians made an attempt to-day on Balaklava, but were immediately repulsed by the horse artillery. I am writing on a small barrel, which is quite a luxury, after having had nothing to eat off for many days. We have no baggage yet. The 95th is reduced to 412 effective men, not quite half our proper strength, and has only eight doing duty and staff officers. High-flyer is a little better, but still weak and ill; however I hope to save him. The ponies are still at Varna; they ought to have been with us. The French manage much better, and look like gentlemen; whilst there are not a dozen English officers with the army who have the means of having their boots blacked, and our coats are thread-bare and torn, sashes in pieces, and epaulets all torn.

“How much I have to thank God that he has enabled me to go cheerfully through this, and that the weather upon the whole has been very fine. There is a sort of majesty at night in sleeping under the high vault of the sky, looking at the bright moon and innumerable stars and planets, and seeing the meteors (which are very numerous here) shoot through the atmosphere. God appears great in his magnificence, and man contemptible. I think you must go to the book of Job to realise what one feels when stript nearly to his primitive nakedness. Upon the whole the military character appears to best advantage under present circumstances, and I see fine fellows who support the good old English name, and who will do so to the end.

[*Written in Pencil.*].—“CAMP NEAR SEBASTOPOL, 12th October, 1854.—Our guns are now all landed, and are placing in position. We expect our cannonade to commence in a very few days. The enemy have fired an immense number of shot and shell at our army without farther damage than killing two men and wounding two others; but of course we are scarcely within their range at present. We are under arms almost every night, from some picquet attack or false alarm. The weather has been very pleasant, with the exception of two days so cold that we expected snow. We have now tents, which makes every difference to the health at night, and we only sleep in the open air on the picquets. I fear there is no chance of our baggage until after we take Sebastopol. V——brought us up a hundred men from Scutari a few days ago,

and we have also received our second chargers, which gives me the white pony looking very well.

“ Dr. Gordon has been very ill with fever, and was quite given up. I sent him home as soon as he could be moved, and he is now on board ship at Balaklava. I have seen a good deal of him during the campaign, and have a high opinion of him ; he worked most assiduously after the battle, and I fear then laid the seeds of his fever. Every one will be glad when this life is over, as we are leading the lives of soldiers rather than of officers ; but it is less hard than you would suppose when the health is good, and I like the active life which the command of a regiment forces on one. It is very difficult to write upon a book lying down, and I cannot yet purchase pens or ink, and have to beg my envelopes and directions. I think I should like the Crimea very much if we were differently circumstanced. Many is the prayer I breathe for you.

[*Written in Pencil.*].—“ BEFORE SEBASTOPOL, 18th October, 1854.—Yesterday the allied batteries being completed, opened fire on Sebastopol early in the morning, and continued until dusk. The fire on both sides was magnificent. The French met with some loss, and had some guns dismounted, and an ammunition magazine blew up, killing one hundred of their men. They also ran short of ammunition, and will not be in a serviceable state, I hear, until to-morrow. Our fire was very satisfactory, as we dismounted all the guns in a brown tower, our principal opponent, and blew up a large Russian magazine in the naval dock-yard. We had no guns dismounted, and very small

loss from the cannonade, but had one tumbril blown up. The Russians, I believe, had two tumbrils blown up. The fleet came up about noon, and kept up fire on Fort Constantine, but I cannot hear with what success. We were watching the cannonade most of the day with great curiosity. I think matters look well, but it will be by no means the short and easy matter which * * * * so sanguinely expected. The French guns are lighter, and evidently not a match for the Russians, and they compete well with ours, and have all their shipping unsilenced within the harbour. I have been quite well since I wrote. The work has been very severe, and both officers and men are very much done up with it, and some have died of cholera and jaundice. In the trenches we are continually shelled, and on picquet have night attacks of the Russians to repulse; but, thank God, the regiment has so far escaped without a single casualty by war since the Alma. One night I was ordered with a working party of two hundred unarmed men (95th) to a battery under the guidance of a young engineer officer, who lost his way, passed the battery, and got so near Sebastopol, that it was quite providential that we were not all taken prisoners. Having gone a little beyond the party, he was challenged by the outlying Russian picquet, but some way got off without their firing upon him. We were close by, but retreated so silently that the picquet did not hear us; we were however shelled from the town.

“BEFORE SEBASTOPOL, 22nd October, 1854.—We have continued a very heavy cannonade since I last

wrote, and upon the whole have the best of it ; but very little impression has been made, and every one says that the place can only be taken by assault. The fatigue to every one is very great—continual duty day and night. We lose men and officers in the trenches, but from what we can collect from deserters, the Russians lose many more than we do. I daily thank God for great mercy through all this. We had a very comforting service this forenoon, and excellent discourse. The clergyman had been much struck by the cheerfulness and patient endurance of the wounded. All the 95th have so far escaped, except one man slightly scratched by a shell when on picquet with me yesterday ; and young Smith, who had a narrow escape from a shell which wounded him in the head.”

It was not long before the tedium of trench-work and picquet duty was to be exchanged for something more exciting. On the 25th of October took place the fight of Balaclava, in which the light cavalry performed that magnificent deed of useless daring, which gave immortality to all engaged. The check sustained by the enemy on this memorable day seems to have led the Russian commander to attempt to revive the spirits of his men by an infantry attack in force, made with great skill upon our weakest point, the Inkermann ridge. Here they were received by the 2nd division, under the command of that distinguished General Sir De Lacy Evans, whose prompt plan of defence was most ably carried out by the officers and men under his command. On the morning of the 26th of October, the Russians

advanced with a body of infantry, estimated at 8,000, with twenty-three guns. The outlying picquets held their ground with undaunted resolution against this overwhelming force till their ammunition was nearly expended, when the artillery and 2nd division arrived to their support. The Russians were then driven back headlong, nearly up to the walls of Sebastopol, leaving "lots of their men prisoners." On this occasion Major Champion greatly distinguished himself. He was in command of the picquet, which lost 7 killed, and an officer and 24 wounded, out of a force about 240 strong. When the attack was made, he promptly threw the men into skirmishing order. As the enemy pushed on he offered the most determined resistance, and only fell back when it was no longer necessary to hold the ground. An eye-witness describes him as standing on the top of a kind of stone barrier on the road, indifferent alike to the extreme proximity of the enemy, and their violent fire, cheering on his soldiers, waving his hand, and vehemently exclaiming, "Slate them, my boys—slate them, my boys." His private account of the affair is given thus in a letter.

"BEFORE SEBASTOPOL, 27th October, 1854.—I cannot tell you my inexpressible joy, after returning from another severe action yesterday, to get your dear letter, written after receipt of my note from the field at Alma. I came heated and flushed from a hard-won field, where I had braved death with a prayer to the Almighty, and looked upon death with the hardened eye of a soldier. I could not repress my feelings when I read your dear

words, and I felt the tears come into my eyes as I looked to a beautiful sunset in the west, where I knew you were ; and much did I pray for you, and sweet was the comfort I felt in thanking the Almighty that we were spared to each other again. I was field-officer on picquet yesterday, with 240 men under me, and our position was attacked by a battery of field-artillery and 8000 men from Sebastopol. They masked their approach by attacking the 49th picquet in front of me by a few skirmishers, who retreated and drew off the 49th. I had taken up position to support the 49th, so was quite ready ; but you may judge of my astonishment when I saw the guns and a large body of men dividing to turn my two flanks. Colonel Herbert, who has just left, had told me, in case of the 49th being driven in, to hold the position as long as possible. I need not tell you all the details, but we met the enemy boldly, pitching into his artillery until it was sufficiently advanced to play upon us ; then I retired the picquets behind the crest, and fought their foot-soldiers until the artillery could be brought up, by which time all my picquets were concentrating towards me, and we made a general rush to the barrier of our main picquet, where we defended ourselves vigorously against the swarms of Russians now appearing everywhere except in our rear ; and we stood with artillery and rifles until all our ammunition was at the last ebb. I knew that succour must come shortly, and sent to say how hard we were pressed. Then I told the men that supports were coming up to us, and I made them cheer and fix bayonets, which daunted the Russians, who had nearly

driven us out by turning one flank. I tried to get up a charge, but it was too much for human nature, and the few men I had with me; but they advanced a little, firing a few shots, and the Russians fell back. Then came the cheering sound of our guns crowning the hill behind us, and pouring showers of grape. The division all formed in battle order, came up, and the retreat of the Russians was an accomplished fact. They were forced back with great loss, the light company driving them along to the very walls of Sebastopol. The 95th lost one man and nine wounded. My picquet had seven men killed, and one officer and twenty-four men wounded. We killed and wounded many, and took about twenty prisoners. After they were in the hands of the artillery and our division their loss was very great, and it is supposed to be seven or eight hundred men; and many prisoners were taken. Sir De Lacy Evans and General Pennefather were very complimentary, and have made me write a despatch.

* * * I saw one young Russian officer whom we had killed on the ridge, and whose corpse bore a gentleman-like and noble expression. It is reported that Prince Gortschakoff commanded, and was wounded during the action. The day before a large force came from the country, and attacked our troops at Balaklava, &c. * * * I saw corpses yesterday of the 17th and 34th Russian regiments, who had been engaged at Alma. The siege goes on very slowly on this side, but it is intended to be pushed on by the French side; and perhaps a week more may enable the assault to be made. * * *

Only think of our having candles now to write by ! But I must say good-bye, as I am just warned for a working party at Gordon's Battery at half-past eleven."

The following is a copy of the despatch alluded to :—

To Brigadier-General PENNEFATHER.

BEFORE SEBASTOPOL,

October 27th, 1854.

" SIR,

I do myself the honour to report that yesterday forenoon, upon ascertaining that the 49th picquets were engaged with the enemy's skirmishers to their front and in advance of the ridge of the hill crowned by the strong knoll, I instructed the officers of three companies of my picquets to advance under the brow of the ridge, and extend so as to be in readiness to repel an advance of the enemy. The light company was particularly directed to guard against the enemy's turning its right flank. The 4th company I left behind the gorge in its original position to guard it and the battery.

" When the enemy had advanced in sufficient force to drive in the 49th picquet, I observed a battery of artillery, supported by a strong force in mass, emerging through an opening under the knoll, and advanced a small party in extended order under colour-sergeant Sullivan,* 30th regiment, to annoy them as long as they

* Since rewarded for his conspicuous gallantry with an ensigncy.

could do so with impunity, a duty he performed to my perfect satisfaction.

“The enemy advanced for the purpose of establishing himself on my left flank, and the picquet directed a good fire upon them as long as it could be done without endangering our flank. I at the same time received a message to say that a large mass was going from Sebastopol by Inkermann to turn our right flank and advance up the gorge to our main picquet.

“In consequence I directed a retreat to be made on the barrier of the main picquet. To give time for picquets to collect, I halted at a proper distance to fire upon the enemy when crossing the crest, and we gave an efficient fire, which I have reason to suppose killed a Russian officer and many men. At last the artillery playing very sharply on us, and our left flank being endangered, we retired with all expedition to the barrier, where the three companies collected and continued to keep up a fire until relief came and our ammunition was expended. By this time we were hard pressed and my right company driven in to the other three companies.

“As soon as relief was arriving and the Russians in retreat, I directed the picquet with fixed bayonets to run down the road to assist in cutting off such of the enemy as were in the gorge. Captain Atcherley, whilst gallantly heading this party, was severely wounded in the arm. I trust that under the very heavy fire we were exposed to, you will not consider our defence dearly purchased by the loss of seven men killed, and one officer and twenty-four men wounded. Indeed, the

enemy's field battery must have fired very ill to enable us to escape so well, and his loss appears to have been great. Captain Atcherley, Lieutenant Green, and Lieutenant Boscawen, were in command of parties engaged, and carried out their instructions to my perfect satisfaction.

"I also beg to report favourably the conduct of colour-sergeant Sullivan, and sergeant William Jamieson, and of the men of the 30th generally, who were particularly anxious to meet with your approbation. The remainder of the 30th came to our support before the end of our affair, and I regret to say that Captain Baillie was wounded.

"I have the honour

"To be, Sir,

"Your most obedient, humble servant,

"J. G. CHAMPION,"

Major 95th Regiment, commanding picquet, 1st brigade,
2nd division, on 26th October, 1854.

Such is the external view of the noble conduct displayed by Major Champion. But there was another and very different side of the picture. On the 26th he was among the coolest under sudden danger, the boldest and most resolute in imminent peril, the fiercest in the charge, and the most daring in pursuit, cheering on his hardy fellows, till the very walls of the beleaguered fortress could alone withstand the rush. On the 28th he wrote thus to his sister:—

"I go through this work cheerfully, and God has been kind in giving me now good health and every

other blessing, but I cannot really like it, and am cheered more than anything by thinking that at last after twenty-three years service, I have been of active use to our dear queen. I thank God I have never yet had occasion to slay any one with my own hand, although I have been target enough, and only have escaped through God's will.

“My little daughter's likeness is a great comfort, and only think, I hope to get Frances's (Mrs. Champion's) soon, as they are to land our baggage to-morrow or next day.”

An affair like that of the 26th could not fail to elicit marked approbation. Lord Raglan's public letter of October 27, tells how gallantly the regiments and picquets were led by Major Mauleverer, Major Champion, Major Emans, and Major Hume. Sir De Lacy Evans not only reported in his despatch that the conduct of the picquets excited general admiration, but more formally put his opinion on record in the following

“*Divisional orders, 29th October, 1854.*—A slight illness has prevented the lieutenant-general from expressing till this day his hearty and most cordial thanks to the division he has the honour to command for their exemplary and most spirited conduct on the 26th inst. His thanks and those of the division are also due to those of the 1st division, who promptly and zealously shared in the action, to our generous and noble allies the French, to the 4th division, and to the

light division for their ready assistance and co-operation. The enemy left in our hands 100 prisoners; about 130 dead remained within or near our position. The picquets of our light division also did severe execution, and if the usual proportion of five or six wounded to one killed occurred, the enemy's loss must have been considerably more than was at first supposed, probably from 700 to 800.

“Not one man of the 2nd division was missing after the action. He laments to say that 12 of our gallant comrades have fallen; 71 including 5 officers were wounded. The severest part of the contest fell in the first instance on the picquets of the 49th, 30th, and 95th regiments. The other regiments subsequently participated. Impartial witnesses not belonging to this division have declared that heroic acts were performed on this occasion. The lieutenant-general knows this expression to have been correct. The promptitude, vigour, and energy of our artillery, and that of the first division, produced important results. The lieutenant-general has had the happiness of hearing the conduct of the whole division, of *picquets in particular*, and of the royal artillery adverted to in terms of the warmest approval by the highest authorities of the French and English armies. The lieutenant-general in his official report to the commander of the forces has not failed in his endeavour to render justice to individual acts of determined courage and merit in this action.

“A further list of names of meritorious officers, non-commissioned officers, and privates, furnished to him

by commanding officers, is about to be forwarded to the commander of the forces, and the performance of this duty will be a most satisfactory and pleasing one to the general.

“The conduct of a sergeant’s party belonging to one of the regiments above named,* was animadverted upon in divisional orders of the 24th inst. The distinguished gallantry on the 26th inst., of the regiment to which that party belonged, affords the commander of the division a proper and most gratifying opportunity to direct the assistant adjutant-general to cause the erasure of the order alluded to from the divisional order book. The proceedings of the court-martial ordered thereon are also herewith annulled, and the prisoners on trial will return to their duty.”

“By order.

“Signed by the

“Assistant Adjutant-General.”

By this time the public despatches of Lord Raglan, after the battle of the Alma, had reached the camp; and it was with not a little astonishment and mortification that the senior surviving officers of the 95th regiment saw that their names had not been even mentioned by the commander of the forces. Reputation, sought literally at the cannon’s mouth, as was the case at the Alma, is purchased at too high a price to be lightly disregarded, and Major Champion felt himself imperatively called upon to ask for some explanation of

* Not the 95th.

the circumstance. From the following letter it appears that the omission was wholly accidental.

“BEFORE SEBASTOPOL, 28th October, 1854.—General Pennefather was kind enough to go to Sir De Lacy Evans respecting myself and Major Hume. Sir De Lacy says, it must have been a complete oversight on the part of Lord Raglan not to have mentioned our names in his despatches, as he spoke of us both in the handsomest terms. He says, that as far as I am concerned, there is very little fear but that it will be rectified, as I had positively a right to be mentioned from taking the regiment out of action.” [N.B. It was afterwards repaired by Lord Raglan in his separate despatch of October 31, in which he states that Major Champion gained great credit by the way in which he conducted the command. Unfortunately, Colonel Champion did not live to hear that his merit had been acknowledged in so graceful a manner.] “With regard to the last picquet action I have not heard Sir De Lacy’s opinion; he shook hands with me, and asked me to write a despatch on it. I hear through other sources that General Pennefather was pleased with our defence, and that the conduct of both the 49th and my picquets is highly extolled; the 30th regiment are full of the wonderful defence we made. Of course our artillery and the main body got great praise for the slaughter they so immediately effected. I have the satisfaction of thinking my protracted defence gave them full time to form and at once defeat the enemy. The number of dead Russians found on the ground we fought over

quite exceeds anything I could have supposed, and I do not think I am wrong in setting down the number which the picquets killed and wounded at 100. There were four guns in the battery, and from 5,000 to 8,000 Russians, and I suppose our picquet at the barrier must have stood the attack of 2,000. They bayoneted all our wounded who fell into their hands, whilst we behaved in the kindest manner to theirs, our men giving them water though there was a scarcity. They have found the bodies of three Russian officers, and two are prisoners, one the officer who took Lord Dunkellin prisoner. We cannot, now we have buried a portion of the dead, estimate their loss under from 500 to 600. This is a fine counterpoise to the mishap at Balaklava, where we lost exactly half of our Light Cavalry, and had seven guns spiked. Last night we captured seventy Russian horses, who came into the camp in a most mysterious way, all ready saddled. In our action the total loss was on our side twelve killed and seventy wounded. We were turned out by a false alarm last night at eleven o'clock, and I was in the trenches until daylight, so am very tired."

"*Sunday Afternoon, 29th October.*—After a hot day yesterday, we have November to day, with a cold north wind and rain. Colonel C—— told me to day, that he had been through the Balaklava action. The Light Cavalry went into action 470 strong and came out 126. They got into the most fearful cross fires. Lord Lucan was some way led off by Captain Nolan, a very clever officer, and Lord Cardigan said that if Captain Nolan

had survived the action he would have been brought to a court-martial. C—— told me he had heard of my admirable defence. Report now says that the French will be ready by Tuesday next to assault their side. The Turks, or Buono Johnnies, seem much ashamed of their repulse the other day. They are brought up here and made to work in the trenches, which saves our men much. Many of our soldiers are very brave, and are disappointed if they are not wounded in action. The Hong-Kong fever was far more terrific than death here. I like the old regiment much the best; our young hands are often not to be depended on, fire at random, and are skulkers, who make a slight complaint excuse for going off duty sick. I have no trouble with the regiment, except in punishing such men where I have the opportunity. I went to Lord Raglan's to-day to lay my case before his military secretary, Colonel Steele, who said that the omission was an oversight on the part of Lord Raglan, and that it will be rectified. The weather is fine to-day, but a terrifically cold wind. Picquets become severe in cold weather, when you have to keep awake half the night. I was on ^{duty} yesterday, and had my picquet in battle order as skirmishing commenced in the old quarter; but it turned out a mere sharp-shooting affair between the Guards and a few of the enemy, without any result, or calling for our interference.

“A tall man came up to the picquet, who turned out to be the draftsman of the *Illustrated News*, and showed me some of his sketches; amongst others, one of our skirmish near the end, when we were at the main

picquet barrier. I took him to sketch our field work and the Inkermann Valley, and afterwards showed him the ground where we were first attacked, and showed him our position. The artillery got great praise, and were supposed to have done much execution, but the dead were found to be, with few exceptions, killed by Minié shots; ditto wounded; and I suspect my picquet must have done great execution; the affair is much spoken of.

"I am truly glad I have never yet with my own hands taken the life of any fellow being; may I be spared doing so, except in self-defence. May every blessing attend you!"

The repulse of the Russians on the 26th was too stern a rebuke to be borne patiently by the garrison of Sebastopol. Time pressed; winter was approaching rapidly, and it became evident to the Muscovite commanders that the Allies must be speedily dislodged if the place was to escape a winter siege. The spirit of their troops too was giving way, and some decisive success was to be attempted at all hazards.

Towards the head of the harbour, looking over the ruins of Inkermann, there is a ravine, to command which a two-gun redoubt had been constructed by the English. This redoubt had not been armed, the ravine had been neglected, and it offered what appeared to be an easy access to the English camp on the heights. Sir de Lacy Evans had seen the danger of leaving such a line of ingress unprotected, and had represented the importance of defensive works there to Lord Raglan. But, before anything could be done to secure the pass, a

vast multitude of Russians was collected to assault it, simultaneously with an attack upon the whole English line overlooking the valley of the Tchernaya. Had the attack been successful, the Allies would have been unable to hold their ground, and must either have re-embarked or surrendered. But Providence guarded the English host, and saved the world from so great a calamity. The victory, however, was gained at the expense of a fearful expenditure of our most generous blood.

In a thick fog, some time before daybreak on the 5th of November, a mighty swarm of the Russians came on, at first stealthily, then more boldly, till at last it rushed like a torrent upon a small but devoted band of English soldiers on outlying picquet duty. The Russians numbered, as was afterwards ascertained, fully 60,000 bayonets. Not more than 8000 could be mustered to resist the human avalanche; but among the defenders of that post were some of the bravest hearts that ever beat beneath the scarlet coat of England. In vain poured on the furious throng; down they went by hundreds before the deadly Minié, and the close unwavering fire of the British line. The number of the assailants was, however, overwhelming; friends and foes were intermingled; levelled bayonets and clubbed muskets, swords and revolvers replaced words of command and evolutions. The battle became a fierce physical struggle, in which the strongest and the boldest alone could hope for victory. The dread story has been told a hundred times, and need not be repeated. Eventually, the enemy was

repulsed with hideous carnage; leaving more bodies on the field than the whole of the thin ranks of the indomitable defenders could have furnished.

Where the *mélée* was thickest and the slaughter greatest, where his men most required encouragement, and most danger of being broken was perceived by his quick and quiet military eye, there rode Major Champion, urging, cheering, restraining, forcing his way through crowds of enemies that had half surrounded his exhausted troops, then closing the ranks and rushing on again, charging with his gallant "Derbies" over the weak redoubt that should have guarded the position, and finally dashing the enemy headlong down the hill.

It was then he fell.

A musket ball passed through his body, and struck to the earth the gentlest heart that was ever disguised by the fierce excitement of battle. He was taken on board a transport at Balaclava, and conveyed to Scutari, where he lingered till the 30th of the month, when his gallant spirit ascended to the presence of his Maker.

CHAPTER V.

SCUTARI.

THE following extracts from the few letters which his failing strength enabled him to address to Mrs. Champion will be read with the deepest interest.

“STEAMER SYDNEY, BALAKLAVA, 7th Nov. (*written in pencil*).—We have had another terrible battle, in which, thank God, we have been victorious, but with sad loss. Hume was ordered in one place with half the regiment, and I in another to support the 41st. We soon met the Russians, and I believe repulsed them, and then were desired to hurry on to the Grenadier Guards in a battery who were getting hard pressed. They were nearly surrounded, and the slaughter on both sides terrific. At first they rather gained upon us, and got under the battery, throwing large stones over—we however repulsed them, and drove them down hill. I was trying to recall the men when I got shot through.

* * * * *

I hope to do well if I can keep my lungs right. The doctors say I have no injury there, but they are affected by the wound, and I spat up blood yesterday. I have a

very nice servant (Harper), he is very attentive—I go down to Scutari. I cannot write more. God bless you, and put your trust in Him.”

“HARBOUR, SCUTARI, 10th November, 1854 (*written in pencil*).—I am very weak, but as well as can be expected. I trust danger has been removed, but it will remain as long as oppression continues in the lungs. I think I mentioned that the wound, although right through my breast and back, is unattended with any thing to produce bad symptoms, but I either bled internally or else from the shock ruptured my left lung, which I knew from the commencement, and which the doctors recognised upon my spitting up blood. Any injury there was done when my wound was fresh. After a little I felt like a steamer with one paddle-box choked (the left). Surgeon Evans, 16th Lancers, finding fever had set in, bled me, which freed the lung very much, and I only now suffer from slight oppression, and the very low state they keep me in. I have never felt at all unhappy, or unwilling to meet God’s ordinances, whatever they may be ; but I wept when I thought of your distress for me, and indeed of all my dear friends and sweet little daughter. Tell her I have her Daguerreotype with me. My servant Harper is a very good man, and extremely attentive. Heyland is still here, but leaves very shortly. He most kindly sent us clothes on board on our arrival. Major Hume is on board, and as attentive as his wounds will permit. You will see a drawing in the *Illustrated News* of the dismounted two-gun battery which we were defending

when I was struck. Owing to various circumstances I had only the Grenadiers and two other companies at the time, and we were firing into the enemy when I was ordered up to the battery to help the Guards, very much pressed. Thus we had Russians both in front and rear—I found great slaughter; 41st, 95th, Grenadier Guards, and Scots Fusilier Guards all fighting mixed up together, but lining the battery. I believe I was senior officer. We were nearly surrounded many times: at length the Russians were close up, and commenced throwing stones over, and getting up and firing—our men returned this, and so we fought for some minutes. At last I proposed to some of the Guards that our men should mount and charge over the battery, which they did in style, driving the enemy right down the hill. Finding they were going too far, and would be surrounded on return, I got off Highflyer, and went down the hill to recall.—The doctor won't let me write any more. May every blessing attend you!"

"GENERAL HOSPITAL, 20th November, 1854.—I know you will not feel comfortable without a line from me. I am lying here from day to day, they say, getting on very well; but I am not allowed to talk or move off my back, which will make you understand how I am situated. They kill and cure you here on their own principles, but I trust in God and a good constitution to carry me through. It is very difficult here to find out when the post goes off to England.

P.S. I get some excellent wholesome nourishment

at last, and even Lord Stratford de Redcliffe sends us jelly, &c.”

“GENERAL HOSPITAL, SCUTARI, 24th November, 1854.
—I am sitting up for the first time to-day, and consequently you see I am better; but a very sad time I have had of it. My servant Harper has been most invaluable, and but for his attention and niceness I should have died here long ago. Another hospital attendant has been very attentive. As far as nourishment goes, I get good things from the hospital; and yesterday they even gave me a gill of port wine, but I now begin to want it much. The beds are insufferably hard, and have worn me into sores. How I regret not having my good old air-mattress, which is kicking about the *Sir Robert Sale* near the Crimea. We purchase nourishing things for ourselves for breakfast, such as chocolate, &c. How often, sweet wife, do I think of you all! with hope—oh, what an exquisite hope!—that our gracious and kind Lord may bring me over this fatal time to return and see you! All the wounded have had their boards, and I am to go to England when sufficiently improved to leave this place. You will like to know that a chaplain constantly visits us, and that I took sacrament yesterday. I have a prayer-book too, and I meditate. I received a large bundle of letters yesterday up to November 3rd; amongst others, one from Mary Carnegie. I trust to write to her a line of affection before the post leaves. Dearest aunt, your nephew’s kindest love. Dearest Maggie, may God spare my return to be all that is affectionate

to you and James! Dearest daughter, may every blessing be with you and sweet Arnold! I must not write more, but you will like to hear from me in person, I am sure. Of course you are directing to me, 'General Hospital, Scutari, Constantinople.' How delightful to have your letters, sweet, sweet friends!"

On the 30th of November this brave soldier and Christian gentleman died. A few days later he was gazetted as a Lieut.-Colonel, a rank the advantages of which have been secured to his widow and two infant children in consideration of his distinguished services.

Of his last moments there are two records; one from his dear friend and brother officer Captain Sargent, to whom he sent his revolver, after having been wounded at Inkermann, that of Captain Sargent having been shot away from his side at the Alma; the other from the Chaplain to the Hospital.

*(Copy of a Letter from Captain Sargent, 95th
Regiment, to Mrs. Champion.)*

"SCUTARI HOSPITAL,

"Christmas Day, 1854.

"MY DEAR MRS. CHAMPION,—

"I will not attempt to write to you as my heart feels on the subject of your sad, sad bereavement. I have not ability to do so in the manner I should wish. You know what sincere friends he and I were, and how much I esteemed him; and, from my long intimacy with him, how I must be aware of the tender love with which he cherished you and his little ones, and how devotedly that love was reciprocated. Knowing all

this as I do, I will not try, I will not presume, to utter my condolence to a heart so smitten, so broken as yours.

“I hear you have already been written to, but it was not then known that his servant had in the most thoughtful manner cut off the accompanying lock of his hair, which I lose no time in sending to you. He, as was the general custom, kept his hair so short that there was not a longer piece. I mention this, lest you might think the servant negligent. His name is Private Harper, of my company (Grenadiers). He attended and watched over your husband up to the moment of his death, and as he is a very steady man, I will repeat to you what he says. He can neither read nor write, otherwise I should have made him do the latter, knowing how much the heart longs to know the merest trifle of such a time. Harper states that though his master was generally cheerful, and invariably told inquirers that he ‘felt easier,’ and ‘a little better,’ the major knew he had received his death-wound, and told Harper a couple of days after, that he was sure he had; but that he did not much care as you were at home, and he lost his life in defence of his country. He used constantly to pray in the most earnest manner; his prayers must have been heard, because he was evidently well prepared for the great change, so resigned to God’s will. The great patience with which he bore his sufferings throughout was most astonishing, and they were certainly great; but his heroic fortitude suppressed their utterance.

“The night before he died he desired Harper to

arrange his bed and pillows in a particular way, which he thought had given him rather more ease during the night before. He shortly after fell into a beautiful sleep, and, what he had not done since he was wounded, continued all night in this quiet sleep until morning, when life passed away without a pang, leaving a sweet happy smile on his face. And thus your husband died as he had lived—gentle and forbearing, a true good Christian man, a thorough gentleman, and a most brave soldier.

“I did not see him fall, there was such a thick mist one could not see at times many yards off; and besides the fighting was such, I can only compare it to a desperate struggle for our own lives. The enemy were rushing on us in fresh dense columns as fast as we sent them reeling back, and each individual saw our only chance was to deal as much destruction as he could, and sell his life as dearly to our enemy as possible. After the battle was over we thought another attack was likely during the night, so I did not think it right to leave the camp to go to where our hospital tents were—nearly a mile off. The following morning I went on outlying picquet in command of four companies, so that it was impossible for me to go and see my wounded friends. When I came off picquet the following morning they had gone to Balaklava to be put on board ship. You may think I ought to have gone down then after them; but the fact is, I *never* absented myself from our camp, we were in such an exposed position, and had so often to stand to our arms, that I did not like to go out of the way. I

mention this to account for my not again seeing my friend from the time I saw him gallantly riding on at our head in among the Russians.

“ I have commenced building a very nice tomb over his grave. When it is finished I will send you a drawing of it. I thought it better to get this done at once without waiting for reference to you, because by the time your answer arrived I would not be here, perhaps dead, killed, and they are burying in such hundreds about the grave, it could not then perhaps be identified. I know no person here to whom we could entrust the work, or who would take any trouble about it, and it is quite a chance any officer of the regiment coming here and stopping a sufficient time. As I am now well enough to be able to go to the ground and superintend it, I considered so good an opportunity should not be lost. I now only hope you will approve of my good intention. For the same reason I have not referred the matter to the regiment; and, besides, indeed *they* are now so few, so many killed, so many wounded, sick, gone away, and the few that are left are so overworked with picquets and entrenchments, and in such daily uncertainty of their own lives; altogether there would be a delay, and in the meantime I would have gone back, so that it might never have been done at all.

“ Believe me, My dear Mrs. Champion,

“ Very sincerely yours,

“ J. A. SARGENT.”

(Letter from the Rev. J. Meredeth Lewes, Chaplain at Scutari Hospital, addressed to Miss Champion.)

“GENERAL HOSPITAL, SCUTARI,

“February 12th, 1855.

“MY DEAR MADAM,

“I have much pleasure in writing to you about the late Lieutenant-Colonel Champion, and should have done so before, had not Colonel Hume told me that he had requested his mother to communicate the sad intelligence to his widow, which I thought she would be able to do much better than myself. Since Colonel Hume's departure it often occurred to me to send a few lines describing my impressions of his last moments, and I tried in vain to discover Mrs. Champion's address. I will now, however, endeavour to make up for the delay by telling you all I can. To say that he bore his pains with Christian meekness and resignation, and uttered not a moan or a murmur during his many days of suffering, is only what your knowledge of his character will have led you to expect. I certainly never saw a countenance with a more angelic expression than his, and yet this gentleness was consistent with a lion-like ardour in battle; conscious as he was of a righteous cause, and the duties of a Christian soldier. Was not this peace at the last one of the blessed fruits of faith in the great Captain of his salvation, to whom he had shown as firm an allegiance as his heroic conduct in the field proves him to have done to an earthly chief? I do

not doubt that he rests, as he died, in peace; and that *your*, I may be pardoned for saying *our* loss, is his gain.

“His death took me by surprise. I had visited him the night before, and he did not appear worse, indeed he seemed to speak with greater ease than usual—by the morning his spirit had flown.

“He did not communicate much to me, and generally seemed wrapt in his own reflections. When I spoke to him a gentle smile would steal over his face, and he would press my hand and thank me for my inquiries. I thought it would be intrusive to question such a man about his religious feelings, and he may have refrained from giving a full expression to them—partly from the difficulty he had in speaking, and partly from our very limited acquaintance, too limited perhaps for entire confidence on his part; not so for my appreciation of his many Christian qualities. Occasionally, however, he would give me a slight indication of the tenor of his thoughts. Once I remember referring to the officer named — who died somewhat suddenly one night in the same room, he remarked that he had a presentiment that he should ‘go off in the same way; but that he was willing to be absent from the body, because he hoped to be present with the Lord.’ At another time I was reading to an officer in the next bed, supposing Colonel Champion was asleep, and had just begun that sublime song of praise, the 19th Psalm, when he repeated in a distinct whisper the alternate verses to the end. I could dwell

long on the many beautiful traits of his character, his sweet humility and simple mind—a mind, too, as I have since heard, adorned with high accomplishments and scientific learning. Guileless as an infant's, and yet matured to the 'full stature of a perfect man,' his spirit sought repose in the bosom of his Eternal Father. There let us hope to join him; and meanwhile, by employing ourselves in works of love and usefulness, purify ourselves of that worldliness which still clings to our best motives.

"Pray convey to Mrs. Champion my most sincere condolence, and believe me,

J. MEREDETH LEWES.

"P.S. The Purveyor told me some time ago that he had despatched all the effects of the late Colonel Champion to his widow; I wished to take charge of some little things, but he assured me that everything would be sent in safety. There was a pen and ink sketch of these hospitals which I observed among his loose papers; this also, I was told, had been enclosed; were it not for the value of even such little mementos to surviving friends, I might have been tempted to ask for this relic of one I esteemed so much."

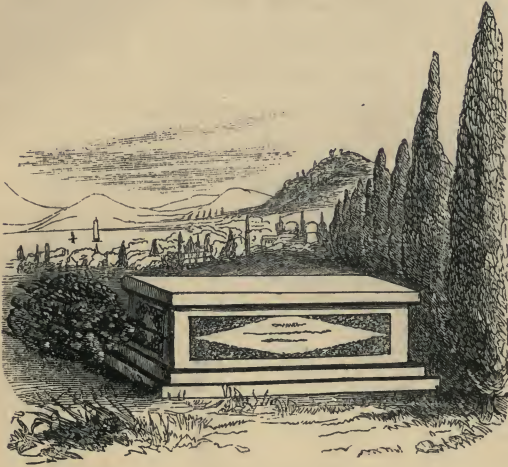
Thus terminated the earthly career of one who showed that the gentlest spirit may be accompanied by the most daring courage; that the lamb in peace may become the lion in war; and that an English officer may be devoted to the arts of peace while retaining

all the high qualities which most especially belong to the military profession.

The testimony of those who served with him, whether above him or beneath him in rank, is unvarying. All speak of him in the same manner, as one whose daring courage, real worth, integrity of character, and pureness of conduct, always ensured the esteem of his brother officers. At the Alma he showed his regiment the way to victory; through what perils the frightful losses it sustained too well declare. In the action of the 26th October, it was known that the picquet of the 95th would never flinch under such command; and their conduct was the admiration of the army. His superior officers were sure of him and his regiment, nor were they disappointed at the battle of Inkermann. Eye-witnesses declare that it was beautiful to see the way he led, and his fine young regiment followed him, into such a fire as the bravest officers would never wish again to witness. Both Sir de Lacy Evans and Major General Pennefather, under whose command Colonel Champion was, and under whose eye he fought, have borne testimony, in the highest terms, to his zeal and gallantry. No wonder, then, that his companions in arms heard of his death with such grief and sorrow as are seldom felt, that they mourned for him as for a brother, and that they have been most anxious to show their respect and love for his memory.

A plain marble tomb, in the Cemetery at Scutari, marks the ground where his body lies. It was placed

there by one of those dear friends who shared his perils, but live to mourn his loss, and whose most touching letter forms part of this brief narrative.



SACRED

TO THE MEMORY OF

LIEUT.-COLONEL J. G. CHAMPION, 95TH REGIMENT,

WHO DIED AT SCUTARI HOSPITAL ON THE 30TH NOVEMBER, 1854,
FROM A WOUND RECEIVED WHILE GALLANTLY COMMANDING
HIS REGIMENT AT THE BATTLE OF INKERMANN
ON THE 5TH INSTANT.

THE END.

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